



Department of Justice

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MIAMI VALLEY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES NET SEVEN IN NATIONWIDE METH CRACKDOWN

More than 200 cities involved in "Operation Wildfire"

DAYTON - Federal, state and local law enforcement agencies in the Miami Valley have arrested seven people and executed eight search warrants as part of a nationwide effort targeting methamphetamine production and distribution.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio; and Robert L. Corso, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, announced the arrests today in the DEA-led "Operation Wildfire," the largest nationally coordinated law enforcement effort designed to target all levels of the methamphetamine manufacturing and distribution chain in the United States.

Law enforcement agencies participating in the arrests and execution of the search warrants include the Dayton office of the DEA, Greene County ACE Task Force, Dayton Police Department, Preble County Sheriff's Office, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office, Warren County Drug Task Force, Huber Heights Police Department, Fairborn Police Department, and Henry County Sheriff's Office.

The teams executed search warrants on August 23 at:

101 Fairground Avenue, Dayton
300 Kiser Street, Dayton
618 Corwin Street, Dayton
10290 State Route 122, Gratis
6560 Millhoff Drive, Huber Heights
1168 Beech Street, Fairborn
1436 Ironwood Drive, Fairborn
547 South Street, Fairborn
Those arrested were:

Freddie Perry, age 34 and his sister Jesica Peters, age 23 at the Gratis address. They are charged federally with possession of equipment and chemicals used to manufacture methamphetamine. If convicted, they face up to ten years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$250,000.

A dealer and one of his customers were arrested after neighbors complained about meth sales occurring at the house. The names remain under seal pending further investigation.

Larry Matheny was arrested at 101 Fairground Avenue in Dayton on a state felony fugitive warrant. He is listed as one of Dayton's "Most Wanted" criminals.

Crystal Sontag, age 23, and Chris Barnett, age not available, were arrested at 1436 Ironwood Drive. Sontag faces state charges of trafficking meth, possession of meth, and illegal assembly of chemicals to manufacture methamphetamine. The penalties can be enhanced because children were present at the site. Barnett was arrested on state charges of failure to appear for assault and disorderly conduct.

Authorities recovered two firearms and small quantities of meth. They also found evidence of meth labs at the Beech Street and Ironwood Drive locations in Fairborn.

In a news conference today at the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C., Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales and DEA Administrator Karen Tandy announced the combined resources of federal, state, and local officials to successfully execute this nationwide operation.

The nationwide effort involved more than 200 U.S. cities and resulted in the arrest of 427 individuals. Agents seized 209 pounds of methamphetamine, 188 pounds of precursor chemicals used to make the deadly drug, and \$255,570 in cash. Fifty-six clandestine laboratories were seized in the nationwide sweep and 30 endangered children were removed from their meth environments. Finally, 28 vehicles and 123 weapons were seized during the raids and a total of 96 search warrants were executed. Operation Wildfire follows President George W. Bush's national strategy to battle the meth drug plague as announced last week by Attorney General Gonzales in Nashville, Tennessee.

"The scourge of methamphetamine demands strong partnerships and innovative solutions to fight the devastation it leaves behind," said Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales. "Through Operation Wildfire, we have joined with state and local law enforcement to successfully pursue meth peddlers and producers in over 200 cities. The Department of Justice is committed to using every available resource to ensure that our streets and neighborhoods are safe and that the methamphetamine problem is brought to an end."

"The battle against this destructive drug is one of nationwide consequences and the Justice Department partnering with the DEA are committed to sweeping meth out of America's streets and homes," Lockhart said. "The fight against this highly addictive drug requires coordination at all levels and Operation Wildfire shows the dedication of law enforcement officials to work cooperatively to overcome this grave threat to society."

Community involvement among neighbors, parents, community leaders, schools, and businesses is also an essential component in this fight. It is extremely important to educate young people about the irreversible harm to the body and damage to the quality of life this drug leaves in its wake. In conjunction with this enforcement effort, DEA launched a new website today as part of its efforts to raise public awareness about the dangers of the drug. The anti-drug website, [http:// www.justthinktwice.com](http://www.justthinktwice.com), gives teens and their parents the straight facts about methamphetamine, and it's not a pretty picture. The realities of meth's physical and emotional tolls are bluntly described and accompanied by photos that show before and after images of meth users. These photos graphically depict the ravages of meth on the user and make a strong statement about its consequences.

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